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Montgomery Philharmonic 2013 - 2014 Concert Season – A Confluence of Culture They Write Descriptive Music – October 27, 2013

Mendelssohn | Verdi | **Beethoven**

Overture, *The Hebrides*, *Fingal's Cave*, Opus 26 (1830, rev. 1832) – Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Mendelssohn was born in Germany and was given a special invitation to travel to England shortly after his twentieth birthday. This trip had a profound effect upon his music as he composed this third symphony, *Scottish*, and this concert overture *The Hebrides (Fingal's Cave)* after this trip. He was quite taken with the island of Saffra's cave-riddled cliffs, which he visited while traveling with Karl Klingemann, a German diplomat from Berlin who was also a family friend. The unspoiled beauty served as a basis for the early romanticist to write an overture meant to stand alone, unlike the typical opera overtures that were being composed at that time. He sketched the outline of the overture while on the boat in 1829 and then returned to Germany to revise and complete the piece in 1830; the premiere took place in 1832.

The overture paints a dark picture of the fog up against the cave-filled cliffs of the Scottish shore. The woodwinds depict the tides as they ebb and flow against the shore. At times the tides become violent in the wind and the brass help to illustrate this with their theme. The finale of the piece combines the two main themes going in opposite directions as the piece fades into silence.

The first American performance of this overture took place in November 1913 with Henry Hadley conducting the San Francisco Symphony.

About Felix Mendelssohn –

Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, born, and generally known in English-speaking countries, as Felix Mendelssohn, was a German composer, pianist, organist and conductor of the early Romantic period. Mendelssohn also served as an editor of Bach's and Handel's works and was instrumental in the revival of Bach's works. He wrote over 750 works, most of which are still unpublished.

- **Born:** February 3, 1809, Hamburg, Germany
- **Died:** November 4, 1847, Leipzig, Germany
- **Compositions:** Violin Concerto, A Midsummer Night's Dream, five symphonies, four overtures, several chamber works, songs for solos voice and piano, and several works for piano and organ
- **Siblings:** Fanny Mendelssohn, Rebecka Mendelssohn, Paul Mendelssohn
- **Parents:** Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Lea Mendelssohn Bartholdy
- **Children:** Paul, Carl, Marie, Lilli, and Felix (passed away as a child)

Instrumentation – 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in A, 2 bassoons, 2 horns in DF, 2 horns in D, 2 trumpets in D & Bb, timpani, , violins 1, violins 2, violas, celli, double basses



1. [Hebrides Overture, Op. 26, 'Fingal's Cave' - Mendelssohn Edition, Vol. 1: Orchestral Music](#)

2. [The Hebrides, Op. 26, "Fingal's Cave" - Mendelssohn: Overtures](#)

3. [The Hebrides, Op. 26 - A to Z of Conductors](#)



1. [Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto / Symphony No. 4 - Italian / Hebrides Overture](#)

2. [Overtures](#)

3. [Mendelssohn: Overtures](#)

4. [Mendelssohn: The Hebrides and Other Overtures \(Cambridge Music Handbooks\)](#)

5. [Major Orchestral Works in Full Score \(Dover Music Scores\)](#)

6. [Mendelssohn: 5 Symphonies, 7 Overtures](#)